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Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child
Sixty-eighth session

Summary record (partial)* of the 1930th meeting
Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 12 January 2015, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Sandberg

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* No summary record was prepared for the rest of the meeting.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Chairperson** declared open the sixty-eighth session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Statement by the representative of the Secretary-General

2. **Mr. Salama** (Director, Human Rights Treaties Division, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)) welcomed the Committee members on behalf of the Secretary-General. He said that the Committee's achievements in 2014, in addition to the consideration of reports from 34 States parties, had included the adoption of a groundbreaking general recommendation/general comment on harmful practices, adopted jointly with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; the organization of a day of general discussion on digital media and children's rights; and the entry into force of the third Optional Protocol to the Convention on a communications procedure.

3. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Convention's adoption and the media attention garnered by certain country dialogues had raised the Committee's public profile immensely. The international online dialogue to mark the anniversary had demonstrated that children could participate meaningfully in such exercises when given the appropriate information and the necessary support in forming their own opinions. Those achievements had, however, been set against a backdrop of ongoing serious violations of children's rights. The shocking events had included massacres of 136 children in a school in Peshawar and possibly of hundreds more in attacks against schools in Nigeria and Syria.

4. The treaty body strengthening process had now come to a successful conclusion with the adoption of General Assembly resolution 68/268. In line with that resolution, the Committee would be working in dual chambers in 2015 to reduce the backlog of reports before it from 80 to 40. As custodian of the human rights treaty with the greatest number of ratifications, the Committee was clearly a victim of its own success. The General Assembly resolution also emphasized increased harmonization of working methods among treaty bodies. The Committee had already taken welcome decisions on that score, such as to offer Member States a simplified reporting procedure and to streamline its concluding observations.

5. With regard to the post-2015 agenda, the Secretary-General's synthesis report on the process to date included important references to children, in particular calls to end violence against women and children and to focus on education. Negotiations were under way on a new draft of goals and indicators, a crucial phase in ensuring that the post-2015 development agenda was grounded in human rights norms, including those of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols.

6. At an event in September 2014, the Human Rights Council had launched the technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce and eliminate preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age. It was intended to be used in conjunction with the Committee's general comment No. 15 on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health. The Committee's Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Wijemanne, had been closely involved in the development of the guidance. OHCHR would welcome references to the guidance in the dialogue with States parties when child mortality was an issue of concern.

7. In closing, he thanked Mr. Cardona for his help in preparing a background report for the Council's upcoming day of discussion on better investment in the rights of the child. He

likewise thanked the three outgoing members of the Committee — Ms. Al-Shehail, Ms. Herczog and Ms. Wijemanne — for their contributions to its work.

Submission of reports by States parties

8. **Ms. Franchetti** (Secretary of the Committee) said that five reports had been received by the secretariat of the Committee since the sixty-seventh session, bringing the number of reports pending consideration to 84. Four reports had been received under the Convention, from South Africa, Bhutan, Malawi and Georgia, and the initial reports of Nauru and Tonga were still pending. Malawi had submitted its initial report under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

9. Since the sixty-seventh session, three countries — the Dominican Republic, Ghana and Guinea-Bissau — had ratified the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, bringing the number of ratifications to 159. Two countries had ratified the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, bringing the number of ratifications to 169. Three countries had signed the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure, making the number of signatories 48, and three more — Andorra, Ireland and Monaco — had ratified it, the number of ratifications now being 14.

Adoption of the agenda (CRC/C/68/1)

10. **The Chairperson** outlined the programme of work for the session, which included the consideration in dual chambers of 20 reports on the Convention and Optional Protocols submitted by 12 States parties; the continued discussion of the Committee's methods of work, especially those concerning the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure and the follow-up to the treaty body strengthening process; the adoption of the recommendations from the day of general discussion on digital media and children's rights; and the resumption of work on three general comments on public spending to realize children's rights; adolescents; and children in street situations. She said she took it that the Committee wished to adopt the agenda.

11. *It was so decided.*

The discussion covered in the summary record ended at 10.35 a.m.